

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010*

**Interview With the South African Broadcasting Corporation**  
*July 13, 2010*

*Terrorist Attacks in Uganda/Counterterrorism Efforts in Africa*

Q. Mr. President, you reached out yesterday to President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, pledging U.S. support after the twin bombings in Kampala.

*The President.* Right.

Q. Can you share some of the details of that conversation with us?

*The President.* Well, I expressed, obviously, most immediately, the condolences of the American people for this horrific crime that had been committed. And I told the President that the United States was going to be fully supportive of a thorough investigation of what had happened.

Al-Shabaab has now taken credit, taken responsibility for this atrocity, and we are going to redouble our efforts, working with Uganda, working with the African Union, to make sure that organizations like this are not able to kill Africans with impunity.

And it was so tragic and ironic to see an explosion like this take place when people in Africa were celebrating and watching the World Cup take place in South Africa. It—on the one hand, you have a vision of an Africa on the move, an Africa that is unified, an Africa that is modernizing and creating opportunities, and on the other hand, you've got a vision of Al Qaida and al-Shabaab that is about destruction and death. And I think it presents a pretty clear contrast in terms of the future that most Africans want for themselves and their children. And we need to make sure that we are doing everything we can to support those who want to build, as opposed to who want to destroy.

*Counterterrorism Efforts in Somalia*

Q. These attacks are very much about what is happening in Somalia today.

*The President.* Yeah.

Q. How does that change, if at all, the game plan of the United States with regard to the transitional Government that is in power there?

*The President.* Well, look, obviously Somalia has gone through a generation now of war, of conflict. The transitional Government there is still getting its footing. But what we know is that if al-Shabaab takes more and more control within Somalia, that it is going to be exporting violence the way it just did in Uganda. And so we've got to have a multinational effort. This is not something that the United States should do alone, that Uganda or others should do alone, but rather, the African Union, in its mission in Somalia, working with the transitional Government to try to stabilize the situation and start putting that country on a pathway that provides opportunity for people, as opposed to creating a breeding ground for terrorism.

*Radicalism in Africa/Africa's Development*

Q. Former U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania—you might know him—Charles Stith has just written a piece about radical Islam in Africa specifically, and I'd like to quote something from it. He says, "It became clear to me that the dirty little secret that no one wanted to discuss

openly was political Islam's corrosive effect and adverse impact on development and stability on the African Continent. It is inarguable that Islam is a factor in Africa," end quote.

In your view, are there strategies in place to deal with this?

*The President.* Well, I think—look, Islam is a great religion. It is one that has prospered side by side with other religions within Africa. And one of the great strengths of Africa is its diversity not only of faith but of races and ethnicities. But what you have seen in terms of radical Islam is an approach that says that any efforts to modernize, any efforts to provide basic human rights, any efforts to democratize are somehow anti-Islam. And I think that is absolutely wrong. I think the vast majority of people of the Islamic faith reject that. I think the people of Africa reject it.

And what you've seen in some of the statements that have been made by these terrorist organizations is that they do not regard African life as valuable in and of itself. They see it as a potential place where you can carry out ideological battles that kill innocents without regard to long-term consequences for their short-term tactical gains.

And that's why it's so important, even as we deal with organizations like al-Shabaab militarily, that, more importantly, we also are dealing with the development agenda and building on models of countries like South Africa that are trying to move in the right direction, that have successful entrepreneurs, that have democracy and have basic human freedoms; that we highlight those as an example whereby Africans can seize their own destiny, and hopefully, the United States can be an effective partner in that.

Q. So this is linked to poverty, that's what you're saying.

*The President.* Well, it's not just linked to poverty. I mean, I think there's an ideological component to it that also has to be rejected. There's—obviously, young people, if they don't have opportunity, are more vulnerable to these misguided ideologies, but we also have to directly confront the fact that issues like a anti-democratic, anti-free-speech, anti-freedom-of-religion agenda, which is what an organization like al-Shabaab promotes, also often goes hand in hand with violence.

## *Sudan*

Q. Sudan.

*The President.* Yeah.

Q. The International Criminal Court has added the charges of genocide to the arrest warrant of Sudan's President, Umar al-Bashir. There's a view in Africa, certainly with the African Union, that the pursuit of President Bashir will be undermining or detrimental to the Doha peace process. What's your view?

*The President.* Well, my view is that the ICC has put forward an arrest warrant. We think that it is important for the Government of Sudan to cooperate with the ICC. We think that it is also important that people are held accountable for the actions that took place in Darfur that resulted in, at minimum, hundreds of thousands of lives being lost.

And so there has to be accountability, there has to be transparency. Obviously, we are active in trying to make sure that Sudan is stabilized, that humanitarian aid continues to go in there, that efforts with respect to a referendum and the possibility of southern Sudan gaining independence under the agreement that was brokered, that that moves forward.

So it is a balance that has to be struck. We want to move forward in a constructive fashion in Sudan, but we also think that there has to be accountability, and so we are fully supportive of the ICC.

Q. Is peace not at risk if he were to present himself to the ICC?

*The President.* Well, I think that peace is at risk if there's no transparency and accountability of the actions that are taking place, whether it's in Sudan or anywhere else in the world.

### *FIFA World Cup in South Africa/Africa's Development*

Q. The World Cup, Mr. President, you mentioned that. To a certain extent, I imagine, around the world, it was overshadowed by what happened in Uganda. But South Africa was basking in the glory of having successfully hosted this World Cup. But let's acknowledge the skeptics, and there were a few—quite a few of them, and they were quite loud. I wonder if you were one of them.

*The President.* No, I wasn't. I, having visited South Africa and seen the extraordinary vitality of the people there, having gotten to know President Zuma and understanding the extraordinary pride that his administration expressed, which I think was a pride that was shared by all South Africans, I had confidence that this was going to be a success.

Obviously, it was an—just a terrific showcase, not just for South Africa, but for Africa as a whole, because what it lifted up was the fact that Africa—all the stereotypes that it suffers under, all the false perspectives about African capacity—that when given an opportunity, Africa is a continent full of leaders, entrepreneurs, governments that can operate effectively. What it—what we now have to do is build on that positive image that comes out of the World Cup.

And when I was in Ghana last year, I was very clear on what I think the agenda has to be: Africa for Africans. That means that we can be partners with Africans, but ultimately, on whether it's issues of eliminating corruption, ensuring smooth transitions of democratic governments, making sure that businesses are able to thrive and prosper and that markets are working for the smallest farmer and not just the most well-connected person, those are issues that Africans can work on together.

And in terms of my orientation working to help in Africa's development, we want to provide resources, but we want to partner with those who are interested in growing their own capacity over time and not having a long-term dependency on foreign aid.

### *Government Corruption in Africa/Africa's Development*

Q. You also spoke in Ghana about the need to stop the blame game.

*The President.* Absolutely. Well, I—look, the—I feel very strongly that—you talk to the average person in Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, they will acknowledge a tragic history in terms of colonialism and negative Western influences. But I think what they'll also acknowledge is their biggest problem right now is the policeman who's shaking them down or the inability for them to be able to get a telephone in a timely fashion in their office or having to pay a bribe. Those are the impediments to development right now. And those are things that Africans can solve if there is a determination and there's strong leadership.

And Nelson Mandela set us on a path in understanding the standards of leadership that are needed, and I think those standards can be met. And you're seeing countries around the

continent who are starting to meet those high standards that are so necessary to ultimately help the people.

### *U.S. FIFA World Cup Bid/Popularity of Soccer in the U.S.*

Q. I want to talk about President—former President Nelson Mandela in a second, but before that, let's just touch on this bid, the U.S. bid for the World Cup in 2018 or '22. How serious are Americans about soccer? My sense is that they're fairly partial to it.

*The President.* Oh, listen, I think that you saw a quantum leap this year because of the excellence of the U.S. team. It's absolutely true that they call baseball the national pastime here in the United States, that basketball is obviously a homegrown invention, and we dominate American football. Those are all sports that developed here and that the United States is obsessed with.

Soccer is a late entry. But what you saw with the U.S. team was huge enthusiasm of the sort that I haven't seen about soccer before. And the younger generation is much more focused on soccer than the older generation. I mean, my daughters, they play soccer; they paid attention to who was doing what in the World Cup. And so I think what you're going to continue to see is a growing enthusiasm, and I think people are very serious about the World Cup being hosted here in the United States.

### *President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief*

Q. I want to touch on AIDS, Mr. President. There's been a great deal of appreciation and good will towards—

*The President.* Right.

Q. —the United States for the Global Health Initiative—

*The President.* Right.

Q. —of which PEPFAR is the cornerstone. Some criticism, though, from AIDS groups in South Africa that there's a de facto decrease in funding, even though there's a 2.3-percent increase. How do you respond to that?

*The President.* Yeah.

Q. It's based on inflation. Inflation in developing countries tends to be higher than it is in the United States. It's a 2.3-percent increase, and they're saying it's a de facto decrease.

*The President.* Well, I have to say that we are seeing not a decrease, but an increase in PEPFAR, an increase in the Global Health Initiative. And I promise you when I'm fighting for that budget here in the United States, people don't see it as a decrease. They see it as an increase. They understand we're putting more money into it, and it's the right thing to do.

What we do want to make sure of is that as successful as PEPFAR has been, as important as it is for us to, for example, get antiviral drugs in there, that we're also helping to build up capacity, consistent with what I said earlier.

So, for example, what are we doing in terms of creating public health systems and infrastructure in a place like South Africa so that the incidents of infection are reduced? We're not just treating the disease itself, but we're also doing a much better job in terms of general public health so that fewer people are getting infected in the first place.

I think that kind of reorientation you're going to start seeing in some areas. We'll continue to provide increases in antiviral drugs, continue to provide millions of rand, millions of—billions of U.S. dollars to basic assistance, but we also want to build capacity at the same time.

*Former President Nelson R. Mandela of South Africa*

Q. Final question, Mr. President. Nelson Mandela will be 92 on Sunday. Your thoughts?

*The President.* Well, he looked terrific, first of all.

Q. Didn't he?

*The President.* And when I spoke to him on the phone after the tragic loss of his granddaughter [great-granddaughter],<sup>\*</sup> he sounded as clear and charming as he always has been.

And he continues to be a model of leadership not just for South Africa, but for the world. So we celebrate him here in the United States, as you do in South Africa. We wish him all the best. And we are constantly reminded that his legacy of seeing every person as important and not making distinctions based on race or class, but the degree to which they are people of character—that's a good guidepost for how all of us should operate as leaders.

And so I wish him all the best. And South Africa continues, I think, to be blessed by a—not just a national treasure, but a world treasure.

Q. Well, South Africans wish you the best. Thank you very much.

*The President.* Thank you.

Q. Very good to meet you.

*The President.* I enjoyed it.

Q. Thank you, sir.

*The President.* Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 3:45 p.m. in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Jacob Zuma of South Africa. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 14.

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*Names:* Mandela, Nelson R.; Museveni, Yoweri Kaguta; Obama, Malia; Obama, Natasha "Sasha"; Zuma, Jacob.

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<sup>\*</sup> White House correction.

U.S.; African Union : Peacekeeping efforts; African Union : Somalia, role in; Communications : News media :: Presidential interviews; Criminal Court, International; Global Health Initiative; HIV/AIDS : Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, President's; Somalia : Democracy efforts; Somalia : International assistance; Somalia : Terrorism; South Africa : 2010 World Cup; South Africa : Former President; South Africa : President; South Africa : South African Broadcasting Corporation; Sports : Baseball; Sports : Basketball; Sports : Football; Sports : Soccer; Sudan : Darfur, conflict and human rights crisis; Sudan : Peace efforts; Sudan : President; Sudan : U.S. assistance; Terrorism : Al Qaida terrorist group; Terrorism : Al-Shabaab terrorist group; Uganda : Counterterrorism efforts, cooperation with U.S.; Uganda : President; Uganda : Relations with U.S.; Uganda : Terrorist attacks in Kampala.

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